

Leviticus 9:1 to 11:47 Torah Reading (Parshat Shemini)
English version to be sung to the Torah tropes by Len Fellman

- 9.1 [And there was] on [the eighth day] a summons by Moses, [calling Aaron] and his sons, [along with the elders] of Israel.
- 2 He said to Aaron, “[You must take for yourself] a calf—[a young bull]—[as an offering for sin], and a ram for a burnt offering, wholly sound, [and offer them] before YHWH.
- 3 [To the children of Israel], [you must say] this:
- ‘Take a he-goat for a *chattat* (sin offering), and a calf [and a lamb], [both of the first year], [wholly sound], [as a burnt offering],
- 4 an ox and a ram [for peace offerings], to sacrifice before YHWH [and a meal offering] to be mixed with oil, because today YHWH will appear to you.’ ”
- 5 [And so did they bring] [that which] [had been commanded] by Moses, to the front of the Tent of Meeting, [and there came forth] the entire community, and they stood before YHWH.
- 6 Then said Moses, “[This indeed] [is the thing] commanded by YHWH [that you must do], that there may appear to you, the glory of YHWH.”
- 7 Then said Moses to Aaron, “Come near to the altar, [and prepare to make] [your sin offering] and [your burnt offering],
- thus atoning for yourself and also for the people.
- [Then you will prepare] the sacrifice—the people’s—aton[ing] [for them], just as was commanded by YHWH.
- 8 So went up Aaron to the altar. [There he slaughtered] the calf as *chattat* that was his.
- 9 [Then they brought to him]—the sons of Aaron—[brought to him the blood], [passing it to him].
- He dipped his finger [in the blood], and placed it on the horns of the altar. [The remaining blood] [he poured out] at the base of the altar.
- 10 Now the fat and the kidneys, and the lobe of the liver, from [the *chattat* offering], he burned on the altar, [just as it was] commanded by YHWH to Moses.
- 11 The meat as well as the skin, he burned with fire outside the camp.
- 12 He then slaughtered the burnt offering.
- [Then they presented to him]—the sons of Aaron—[passing to him] the blood, and he dashed it on the altar, all around.

9:13[As for the burnt offering]: [they presented it] [to him] in sections, [as well as the head], and he burned them on the altar.

14He then washed the entrails and the legs, and turned them to smoke with the burnt offering (*olah*) upon the altar.

15[And he brought forth] the offering of the people:
[and thus he took] the goat [for the sin offering] that was the people's. He slew it and made of it a *chattat*-offering, like the first one.

16[He brought forward] the burnt offering, [end aliyah] and prepared it [according to law].

17 [He then brought forth] [the grain offering]. He took a handful from it, and burned it on the altar.
[This was in addition] to the offering for the morning.

18 He slaughtered the bull and the ram; the offering of *shalom* that was the people's.
[Then they presented to him]—the sons of Aaron—the blood, [passing it to him], and he dashed it on the altar, all around.

19[The choice parts] from the bull [and also from the ram]: [the broad tail], [the covering fats], the kidneys, and the lobe of the liver.

20They then placed the fat parts [on the animals' breasts], and he burned the choice parts on the altar.

21 The [animals' breasts] [as well as] the right thigh, [were elevated] [by Aaron]—[a wave offering] in the presence of YHWH, just as was commanded by Moses.

22 [And lifted up] Aaron [his hands] [toward the people], [and he blessed them].
[He then came down] [from having performed] [the offering for sin], [the burnt offering] [and the peace offering].

23 Then went Moses and Aaron into the tent of meeting, and when [they came out] they blessed the people.
[end aliyah] Then was revealed the glory of YHWH [to all the people].

24[There went out] a fire from before YHWH, consuming upon the altar [the burnt offering] [and the choice parts].
[This was seen] by all the people, [and they shouted out], [flinging themselves] on their faces.

10:1 Now took [the sons of Aaron]—Nadab and Abihu—each one [his fire pan]. [They put] [into it] fire, and placed on top of it incense. [This they presented] before YHWH as fire that was alien, [this being fire] [which had in fact never been] prescribed for them.

2 [And there came forth] [a flame of fire] from before YHWH, and swallowed them up, and they perished in the presence of YHWH.

3 Then said Moses to Aaron: [This it is] [about which spoke] YHWH [when He said],

“[By those near me] I will be sanctified. Before the whole people, I will be honored.” [And standing there silent] was Aaron.

4 Then summoned [by Moses] was Mishael and Eltzafan, sons of Uzziel, uncle of Aaron. Moses [said this to them], *Two tropes on one word *kirvu*

“[You both must come] [forward now]*, [and carry off] your kinsmen from the front of the sanctuary, [taking them] [outside the camp].”

5 [And so they came forward] [and carried them out] [in their tunics], outside the camp, [just as it was] told to them by Moses.

6 Then said Moses—[speaking to Aaron] [and to Eleazar] and Ithamar, | his sons,

“[Let your heads] [not be deshevelled] | [nor your clothing] be torn. Otherwise you will die, and the entire community will experience wrath. [But your kinsmen], the whole [house of Israel] shall bewail the burning: [that which was burned] by YHWH.

7 [From the entrance] of the Tent of Meeting [you must not] go out, [lest you die], [because the oil] of anointing of YHWH [is upon you].”

[And they did] according to the word of Moses.

8 Then spoke YHWH to Aaron, saying,

9 “Wine [and strong drink] [you shall not drink], [neither you] | nor your sons [after you], when you enter [the Tent of Meeting], that you may not die. It is a law for the ages, [for your generations],

10 [that you may distinguish] between the holy and the profane, between the unclean and the clean,

11 [and to instruct] *B'nei Yisrael* all of the laws—the ones [that have been spoken] [by YHWH] [end aliyah] [to them], [at the hand of Moses].”

12 Then spoke Moses to Aaron and [to Eleazar] [and to Ithamar], [the two sons of Aaron] [that were left],

”Take [the meal offering] that is left [from the fire offerings] of YHWH and eat it unleavened, next to the altar, [because indeed] holy of holies it is.

13 And [you shall eat it] in a place that is holy, since [as a portion for you] [and as a portion for your sons] it is prescribed, [from the fire offerings] of YHWH, since thus [have I been commanded].

10:14 However the breast of the wave offering [together with] | the thigh [of the donation] you must eat in a place that is clean:
[it is for you], and for your sons and your daughters [after you].

[As a portion for you] [and for your descendants] [it is prescribed], from the sacrifices of well-being, of *B'nei Yisrael*.

15 The thigh [of the elevated gift], the breast [of the wave offering],
[along with] [the fire offerings] of fat [they shall bring] to lift up as a wave offering before YHWH.

It shall be for you [and for your descendants] [after you] [as a law for the ages], [end aliyah] [just as it was] [commanded by YHWH].

16 [Now as regards] | the goat [that was offered for sin] there came [an inquiry] by Moses, [and there it was!]—[all burned up].

[He became angry] with Elazar and Itamar, the sons of Aaron [(the ones still alive)] and he said,

17 “[Why did you] not eat [the *chattat* offering] in the place that is holy, [because indeed] holy of holies, it is?

[And in fact] | it was given [to you] [to bear the guilt of the community, to atone for them] in the presence of YHWH.

18 [As we can see], [you have not brought] the blood (the life force) to the sanctuary—within.

[You should surely] have eaten the offering [in the holy place], as I have commanded.”

19 Then responded Aaron to Moses, “But see, [how on this very day], they have brought their *chattat* [and their *oleh* offerings] before YHWH,
and there happened to me such a tragedy. Had I eaten the *chattat* offering today, [would it have been good] in the eyes of YHWH?”

20 [This was heard] [by Moses] [end aliyah] and it seemed right in his eyes.

11:1 [And there spoke] YHWH to Moses and to Aaron, saying to them,
 2 [you must speak] to *B'nei Yisrael* as follows. These are the creatures that [you may eat] of all the animals, that are on the earth:
 3 [Any quadruped] | that has [true hooves]*, [and that has] clefts [through the hooves] and that chews the cud, [among the mammals]—
 such [you may eat]. *according to Aryeh Kaplan
 4 However these you [may *not* eat] [from those chewing] the cud [and from those having] hooves:
 [first is the camel], since one chewing the cud [it is indeed], [but as for hooves], it has no true hoof. Thus unclean (*tamei*) it is for you.
 5 [And also the hyrax], [since one chewing] the cud it is, [but as to hooves], it has [no true hoof]. *Tamei* it is for you.
 6 [And as for the hare]: one chewing the cud it is, [but as to hooves], it has no true hoof. *Tamei* it is for you.
 7 [And as for the pig]: although a true hoof [it has indeed], and split with a cleft [is its hoof], yet its cud [it does not chew]. *Tamei* it is for you.
 8 [From their flesh] you may not eat, [and their carcasses] you [must not touch]. *Tamei* they are for you.
 9 Now this [is what you may eat], of all that is in the water:
 those creatures [that are equipped] with fins and scales, [those living in water] [whether in the seas] or in the rivers: these you may eat.
 10 [But any one] that possesses not fins [as well as scales] [living in the seas] or in the rivers,
 among all that swarms in the water [and among all] that lives in the water, detestable it is to you.
 11 [Detestable indeed] they shall remain to you. From their flesh, you shall not eat, even their carcasses you shall detest.
 12 Every one that [possesses not] both fins and scales, in the water—detestable it is to you.
 13 Now these you must avoid [of those that fly]: they must not be eaten, detestable are they:
 the eagle, the bearded-vulture, and the osprey or black vulture,
 14 [the hawk-like bird that is called the kite] and the falcon according to their kind,
 15 every raven, according to its kind,
 16 and also the desert owl, [the screech owl] [and the sea gull], and the hawk, by their kind,
 17 the little-owl and the cormorant, and the great owl,
 18 the barn owl, the pelican, and the magpie,
 19 and the stork, and the heron [according to their kind], [and also the hoopoe], as well as the bat.

11:20 All [swarming creatures] that fly, [but that also walk] on four legs, detestable they are to you.

21 But *these* [you may eat] among all swarming creatures that fly, [and that also walk] on four legs: [those with] [jointed legs] above their feet, to hop by their means upon the ground.

22 As for these, from them you may eat: the red locust [according to its kind], [the yellow locust] by its kind, the cricket by its kind, and the grasshopper, [according to its kind].

23 But every swarming creature that flies, if it walks on four legs, detestable it will be to you.

24 [Through these] [you would be unclean]: anyone touching their carcass is *tamei* until evening.

25 [Anyone carrying] their carcass must wash his clothing, and is *tamei* until evening.

26 [Thus every animal] of which [it is the case] that it has true hooves, [but as for a cleft] | there is [no cloven hoof], and the cud it [does not chew], *tamei* it is to you. Anyone touching it [becomes unclean].

27 [And any beast] | that goes [about on its paws] [among the animals] that walk [on four legs]: *tamei* it is to you. Anyone touching their carcass is unclean until evening.

28 [One who lifts up] their carcass must scrub his clothing, and is unclean until evening. *Tamei* they are to you.

29 [Now these] [are for you] *tamei*, among swarming creatures that creep on the earth: the weasel, the mouse, and the ferret, of every kind, 30 the hedgehog, the chameleon, and the lizard, the snail and the mole.

31 [These are the ones] that are *tamei* to you, [among all that crawl].

[And whosoever] [is found touching them] [when they are dead], is *tamei* until evening.

32 Anything [on which should fall] [upon it] any of them, when they are dead, [shall be unclean].

[From any vessel of wood], or a cloth or a skin or sackcloth—[any article] of which one performs a task, therewith [in water], [must be immersed]. [end aliyah] It is unclean until evening, [and then it is clean].

33 [And any vessel of clay] of which should fall any of them, inside: [whatever there may be]— [whatever there is] [that lies within it], [becomes *tamei*], and the vessel must be broken.

34 [Of any food] [that may] [normally be eaten], of which [there comes] | [onto it] any water, it is unclean.

[And any liquid] that may be drunk [that is in any vessel], shall be *tamei*.

11:35 [And thus anything] [of which there falls] [from their carcass] | [something upon it] [becomes unclean].
 [Even an oven], [a range or a stove] [must be demolished]: *tamei* it becomes. And *tamei* it will be to you.
 36 And [yet a spring] [or a cistern], a gathering of water, will remain clean. Any *other** water touching the carcasses, is unclean. *re Aryeh Kaplan
 37 If [there should fall] [some of their carcass] on edible seeds, that [have been planted], then clean [they shall remain].
 38 And yet [if one put water] [on the seed], and there falls the dead body upon it, *tamei* it is, to you.
 39 If there should die one of the animals that are permitted to you, for eating, one who touches its carcass, is unclean until evening.
 40 One who eats from its carcass must scrub his clothing, remaining unclean until evening.
 [One who picks up] its carcass must also scrub his clothing, and is unclean until evening.
 41 [Any teeming creature] that teems on the ground, must be avoided, and not be eaten.
 42 [Anything at all] that crawls on its belly—[anything there is] | [that walks] [on four feet]
 [or more], [creatures with] [many feet], [among all teeming things] that teem on the earth—you are not to eat them, they must be avoided.
 43 Don't defile your souls [through that which swarms] on the earth.
 Don't become unclean through them; you will be contaminated by them.
 44 For I am Adonai your God. [You must make yourselves holy] and be sanctified, for holy am I.
 Don't defile your souls [through any teeming thing] that creeps on the earth.
 45 For I [am YHWH] who brought you out from the land of Egypt, to be for you a God. You must be holy, since I am holy.
 46 This is the Torah for the animal, and the bird, and every living being that moves in the water, and every creature that teems on the ground—
 47 to distinguish [that which is unclean] from [that which is clean],
 and those living creatures [that may be eaten] from [those creatures [end aliyah] that may not be eaten].

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh *or* yetiv kadma *or* pashta geresh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, geresh, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh (<i>or</i> : azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
(Renew our days)	(She weeps bitterly).	(a fire-offering to God)

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalsholet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “*God*” or “*Adonai*”.

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
 Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)
 Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)
 The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)
 JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)
 Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)
 Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series
 Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
 The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
 The New King James Bible (1982)